



ITALY BEST PROSPECT INDUSTRY SECTOR PROFILE

Sector Name: **PLEASURE BOATS AND ACCESSORIES**

ITA Industry Code: MAR

The Italian Pleasure Boat market is the second largest in the world, with an estimated value of \$1.0 billion, second only to the U.S. market, at approximately \$10.0 billion. Italy's natural resources, including 104 ports and marinas and 8,000 miles of waterways, make it a prime location for a thriving pleasure boat market. Currently, there are about 400,000 pleasure crafts in Italy. The Italian market is expected to grow 20% in 2003.

The Italian pleasure boat market is relatively new. Before 1990, pleasure boats were unaffordable to all but a select few due to Italian economic conditions and the relatively high cost of buying and maintaining a boat. With the economic boom of the mid-1980s and the implementation of "boat friendly" legislation, boat purchase and maintenance became more feasible. Today the development of the market continues, as government sponsored projects take hold to modernize and develop pleasure boat marinas and ports, creating new berths and moorings. New legislation also cuts through bureaucratic red tape and reduces fees for boat ownership. In January 2003, new legislation was passed abolishing yearly docking fees for all pleasure boats, as well as granting government protection of certain marinas. Within the next few years, the government plans to more than double the existing number of boat berths in southern Italy. Projects such as these create new opportunities in nautical tourism and the pleasure boat market.

There are many opportunities for American businesses in the Italian pleasure boat market. Besides in the market for new and used motorboats, sailboats, inflatable boats, and motors, opportunities can be found in the exportation of marine accessories such as safety devices and nautical software, as well as in the development and management of Italian marinas and ports. In these fields, American products lead in quality, technology, and reliability. For the past ten years, the United States has held a steady share of the import market averaging about 20 percent per year. The largest imported American item remains the outboard motorboat.

Data Table:

(USD Millions)	2001 (actual)	2002 (actual)	2003 (estimated)
Total Market Size	0.671	0.811	1,039.8
Local Production	0.122	0.145	0.161
Exports by Local Firms	-	-	-
Imports	0.531	0.640	0.827
Imports from U.S.	0.115	0.134	0.185
Exchange rate \$1=euro	1.117	1.057	0.877

The above statistics are unofficial estimates.